

Last-Name: Shelley  
Zip-Code: 77379  
x: 72  
y: 15

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**Ashlee Jahn**

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**From:** Patricia Harless  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 23, 2011 2:28 PM  
**To:** Ralph Salier  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed in Defense of Photo Voter ID in Today's Chronicle

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Mr. Salier-Hellendag,

Thank you for your email. I appreciate you taking the time to express your thoughts on the photo voter ID legislation. While this is an issue that a majority of Texans and residents of District 126 support, I understand that there are opinions on both sides. The purpose of Senate Bill 14 is to ensure the integrity of our elections. As the bipartisan Commission on Federal Election Reform concluded, ballot access should have at least the same degree of integrity as boarding a plane or cashing a check, both of which require a photo ID. Senate Bill 14 ensures access to polls by requiring DPS to provide a free photo election ID to registered voters who request one. The bill also provides reasonable exceptions to the photo ID requirement for indigent and disabled voters. In addition, disabled persons and the elderly will still be able to vote by mail without the photo ID requirements. Current law allows registered voters to vote by mail if they anticipate being out of town during the election, or are over 65, or have an illness or disability that makes them unable to vote in person.

Under the current law, we do not have the tools necessary to stop in-person voter fraud. In fact, in-person voter fraud may not even be evident until after the election has occurred. Over the last couple of legislative sessions we have heard from many witnesses who testified that voter-registration cards have been stolen and false votes cast in those persons names, most of who were deceased. The Texas Secretary of State as well as other law enforcement agencies testified about past and current voter fraud that has been prosecuted. Though there are more cases of voter fraud than are prosecuted, even one fraudulent vote can cost an election. Last year, after a re-count, State Representative Donna Howard won her election by 3 votes.

If you would like to watch the House committee testimony on this bill from the 82nd legislative session, you may visit the following link: [House Testimony](#).

While we might not be in agreement on this issue, we probably agree on much more than we disagree. Again, thank you for taking the time to write. I always appreciate hearing from my constituents. If my staff or I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Harless  
State Representative  
District 126  
512.463.0496 (Capitol office)  
281.376.4114 (District office)

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**From:** Ralph Salier [mailto:[rsalier@hotmail.com](mailto:rsalier@hotmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2011 1:23 PM  
**To:** Patricia Harless  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed in Defense of Photo Voter ID in Today's Chronicle

Ms. Harless,

I feel that you are fooling yourself into believing this nonsense. Voter fraud is fairly low and when you register to vote and get your card, and this matches up to an address provided, this should be good enough. I know that the DPS will issue free IDs but have you stood in line lately at a DPS office? How about this idea--- When you have voter registration drives at the local Kroger or where ever, also have a photo ID booth and then provide a voter registration card with the person's photo!! what an idea. This can be done through the auspices of the state or can be provided by the individual parties involved. All that is needed is a "standard" that needs to be met for the photo.

Lets stop fooling around and make sure that EVERY ONE THAT IS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE CAN, lets stop disenfranchising the poor and those who do not have the means to get the photo done.

R. Salier-Hellendag  
Spring TX

**Ashlee Jahn**

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**From:** Patricia Harless  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2011 3:24 PM  
**To:** mscheffler1@comcast.net  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed in Defense of Photo Voter ID in Today's Chronicle

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Ms. Scheffler,

Thank you for your email. The photo voter ID legislation does have an exemption for disabled voters. They will not be required to present a photo ID and will still be able to use their voter registration cards. In addition, disabled persons and the elderly will still be able to vote by mail without the photo ID requirements. Current law allows registered voters to vote by mail if they anticipate being out of town during the election, or are over 65, or have an illness or disability that makes them unable to vote in person.

I hope this information is helpful. Again, thank you for taking the time to write. I always appreciate hearing from my constituents. If my staff or I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Harless  
State Representative  
District 126  
512.463.0496 (Capitol office)  
281.376.4114 (District office)

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**From:** mscheffler1@comcast.net [mailto:mscheffler1@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2011 3:46 PM  
**To:** Patricia Harless  
**Subject:** Re: Op-Ed in Defense of Photo Voter ID in Today's Chronicle

What about the people (mostly older or incapacitated) who are not able to get out and get something with a photo id. Some can't stand in long lines to wait at DPS offices which are notorious for that! I am curious how that will be handled and if you have any plan in place to help those citizens? Marilyn Scheffler

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**From:** "Patricia Harless" <Patricia.Harless@house.state.tx.us>  
**To:** "Patricia Harless" <Patricia.Harless@house.state.tx.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2011 1:04:53 PM  
**Subject:** Op-Ed in Defense of Photo Voter ID in Today's Chronicle

Dear Friends,

Please see the following editorial in defense of photo voter ID, which was published in the November 15th edition of the Houston Chronicle.

Sincerely,

Patricia Harless  
State Representative  
District 126  
512.463.0496 (Capitol office)  
281.376.4114 (District office)

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### **Making the Case for Photo IDs at the Polls**

By: State Representative Patricia Harless

In order for our democratic republic to function and thrive, elections must be free of fraud.

Safeguarding election integrity, therefore, is among the primary functions of state government. The photo identification bill that we passed in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Texas Legislature is a significant measure to improve election integrity and safeguard against election fraud. Yet, as the U.S. Department of Justice reviews the law for pre-clearance under the Voting Rights Act, a barrage of inaccurate attacks have been levied against our election integrity bill that must be corrected.

Senate Bill 14, which we passed last session, requires individuals to show photo ID before voting. This bill lists several forms of government-issued photo ID to be accepted at polling places, including identification issued by DPS (for most this will be a Texas driver's license or ID card); a military identification card that contains the voter's photograph; a United States Citizenship certificate that contains the voter's photograph; a United States passport; and a license to carry a concealed handgun issued by the DPS. Senate Bill 14 requires DPS to provide a free photo election ID to registered voters who request an ID. The bill also provides reasonable exceptions to the photo ID requirement for indigent and disabled voters and allows individuals not carrying photo ID to vote provisionally, as long as they provide verification of their identity within six days of the election.

These provisions will ensure that eligible, qualified citizens are able to exercise their right to vote under a secure system that prevents election fraud. In April 2008 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld Indiana's photo ID law six-to-three in *Crawford v. Marion*. The judgment of the Court, issued by Justice Kennedy, undermines the continuing spurious claims made by opponents of photo ID requirements.

While an ID requirement may place a burden on voters, Justice Steven's opinion concluded that "burdens... arising from life's vagaries, however, are neither so serious nor so frequent as to raise any question about the constitutionality of [photo ID requirements]." Justice Steven's opinion also noted that for the few voters without ID, the burden of obtaining one, "does not qualify as a substantial burden on the right to vote." Justice Scalia's concurring opinion stated that "the universally applicable requirements of Indiana's voter-identification law are eminently reasonable" and that the burdens of photo identification were "minimal and justified."

Importantly, statistics from Indiana and Georgia show that ID requirements work well and do not suppress turnout, as opponents often claim. All along, our goal with photo ID has been to restore integrity to the electoral process, which will increase turnout.

Accordingly, showing photo ID before voting is a common-sense reform that is supported by a majority of Texas voters, regardless of political affiliation. For example, a *University of Texas-Texas Tribune* poll in February 2011 found that 75 percent of Texans agree "with the idea that registered voters should be required to present a government-issued photo

ID at the polls before they can be allowed to vote." Even 54 percent of those who identify themselves as "strong Democrats" agree with a photo ID requirement. Independents show strong support for photo ID: 69 percent. Requiring a photo ID before you can vote has strong bi-partisan support.

Ultimately, every fraudulent vote cancels out a legitimate vote, which means that election integrity is and must remain a top priority of state government. The Department of Justice has no basis to deny clearance of our election integrity laws given the Supreme Court's decision and ample experience from other states proving the efficacy of photo ID requirements.

*Harless, a Republican, represents state House District 126 in northwest Harris County. She was the sponsor of Senate Bill 14, the photo voter ID legislation, in the Texas House.*

**Ashlee Jahn**

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**From:** Patricia Harless  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 23, 2011 10:37 AM  
**To:** Robert Blain  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed in Defense of Photo Voter ID in Today's Chronicle

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Mr. Blain,

Thank you for your email. I appreciate you taking the time to express your thoughts on the photo voter ID legislation. While this is an issue that a majority of Texans and residents of District 126 support, I understand that there are opinions on both sides. The purpose of Senate Bill 14 is to ensure the integrity of our elections. As the bipartisan Commission on Federal Election Reform concluded, ballot access should have at least the same degree of integrity as boarding a plane or cashing a check, both of which require a photo ID.

Under the current law, we do not have the tools necessary to stop in-person voter fraud. In fact, in-person voter fraud may not even be evident until after the election has occurred. Over the last couple of legislative sessions we have heard from many witnesses who testified that voter-registration cards have been stolen and false votes cast in those person's names, most of who were deceased. The Texas Secretary of State, as well as other law enforcement agencies, testified about past and current voter fraud cases that have been prosecuted. Though there are more cases of voter fraud than are prosecuted, even one fraudulent vote can cost an election. Last year, after a re-count, State Representative Donna Howard won her election by 3 votes.

If you would like to watch the House committee testimony on this bill from the 82nd legislative session, you may visit the following link: [House Testimony](#).

While we might not be in agreement on this issue, we probably agree on much more than we disagree. Again, thank you for taking the time to write. I always appreciate hearing from my constituents. If my staff or I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Harless  
State Representative  
District 126  
512.463.0496 (Capitol office)  
281.376.4114 (District office)

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**From:** Robert Blain [mailto:[robbblain@hotmail.com](mailto:robbblain@hotmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2011 8:47 PM  
**To:** Patricia Harless  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed in Defense of Photo Voter ID in Today's Chronicle

How many documented cases of voter fraud have there been in Texas in the last 10 years? I think the AG's office has had about 267 requests for investigations out of over 20,000,000 votes... or a rate of 0.001335 (or, in words, less than 2 out of every 100,000 votes...)

Fraud is something that cannot be allowed to happen with any regularity, but I've probably blinked as many times while writing this e-mail as there have been cases of suspected voter fraud in our state.

**Ashlee Jahn**

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**From:** Patricia Harless  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 22, 2011 5:04 PM  
**To:** Jacqueline Clark  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed in Defense of Photo Voter ID in Today's Chronicle

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Ms. Clark,

Thank you for your email. I appreciate you taking the time to express your thoughts on the photo voter ID legislation. While this is an issue that a majority of Texans and residents of District 126 support, I understand that there are opinions on both sides. The purpose of Senate Bill 14 is to ensure the integrity of our elections. As the bipartisan Commission on Federal Election Reform concluded, ballot access should have at least the same degree of integrity as boarding a plane or cashing a check, both of which require a photo ID. Senate Bill 14 ensures access to polls by requiring DPS to provide a free photo election ID to registered voters who request one. The bill also provides reasonable exceptions to the photo ID requirement for indigent and disabled voters. In addition, disabled persons and the elderly will still be able to vote by mail without the photo ID requirements. Current law allows registered voters to vote by mail if they anticipate being out of town during the election, or are over 65, or have an illness or disability that makes them unable to vote in person.

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If you would like to watch the House committee testimony on this bill from the 82nd legislative session, you may visit the following link: [House Testimony](#).

While we might not be in agreement on this issue, we probably agree on much more than we disagree. Again, thank you for taking the time to write. I always appreciate hearing from my constituents. If my staff or I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Harless  
State Representative  
District 126  
512.463.0496 (Capitol office)  
281.376.4114 (District office)

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**From:** Jacqueline Clark [mailto:[jacquisine@earthlink.net](mailto:jacquisine@earthlink.net)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2011 1:50 PM  
**To:** Patricia Harless  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed in Defense of Photo Voter ID in Today's Chronicle

Dear Ms. Harless,

I read your piece in this morning's Chronicle and I find it very disappointing that you support requiring photo voter ID. You failed to cite any evidence of any alleged voter fraud, and raising new barriers for voters seems sadly reminiscent of things like poll taxes and literacy tests. I'm sorry to learn this about you.

Jacquie Clark  
jacquisine@earthlink.net  
281-687-6620 cell

**Ashlee Jahn**

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**From:** Patricia Harless  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 23, 2011 2:51 PM  
**To:** Herbert Steptoe  
**Subject:** RE: Op-Ed in Defense of Photo Voter ID in Today's Chronicle

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Mr. Steptoe,

Thank you for your email. I appreciate you taking the time to express your thoughts on the photo voter ID legislation. While this is an issue that a majority of Texans and residents of District 126 support, I understand that there are opinions on both sides. The purpose of Senate Bill 14 is to ensure the integrity of our elections. As the bipartisan Commission on Federal Election Reform concluded, ballot access should have at least the same degree of integrity as boarding a plane or cashing a check, both of which require a government issued photo ID.

Under the current law, we do not have the tools necessary to stop in-person voter fraud. In fact, in-person voter fraud may not even be evident until after the election has occurred. Over the last couple of legislative sessions we have heard from many witnesses who testified that voter-registration cards have been stolen and false votes cast in those person's names, most of who were deceased. The Texas Secretary of State as well as other law enforcement agencies testified about past and current voter fraud cases that have been prosecuted. Though there are more cases of voter fraud than are prosecuted, even one fraudulent vote can cost an election. Last year, after a re-count, State Representative Donna Howard won her election by 3 votes.

If you would like to watch the House committee testimony on this bill from the 82nd legislative session, you may visit the following link: [House Testimony](#). According to the testimony from officials from Georgia and Indiana, both states with photo voter id laws in place, turnout increased in 2008 and 2010.

While we might not be in agreement on this issue, we probably agree on much more than we disagree. Again, thank you for taking the time to write. I always appreciate hearing from my constituents. If my staff or I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Harless  
State Representative  
District 126  
512.463.0496 (Capitol office)  
281.376.4114 (District office)

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**From:** Herbert Steptoe [mailto:[hstep2k@yahoo.com](mailto:hstep2k@yahoo.com)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 15, 2011 3:25 PM  
**To:** Patricia Harless  
**Subject:** Re: Op-Ed in Defense of Photo Voter ID in Today's Chronicle

Breaking the Case.... 

Thank you for your op-ed. I am a volunteer voter registrar in Harris County. It should be up to the voter registration office and the elections office to validate and secure election integrity. The fraud do not occur with the voter.

As you stated "we" who passed the bill have yet to present evidence that fraud occurred in Texas among voters at the polls.

Given all the other more important issues facing our state you and Gov. Rick found it more important to put voter id as a top priority. This goes to show where your priorities and what your motives are.

Finally, Rep. Harless could you please produce documented evidence of voter fraud and the cost to this state with this far right agenda item? If you can't provide the evidence then your claims are nul and void. What proof do you have that voter id will improve voter turnout. Please stop the propaganda.